

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1037
DEPT OF AGRICULTURE

UNCLAS NEW DELHI 12015

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EAGR IN
SUBJECT: PROGRESS OF SOUTHWEST MONSOON

1. DURING THE WEEK ENDING SEPTEMBER 3, 25 OF THE 35 INDIAN WEATHER SUBDIVISIONS REPORTED PRECIPITATION AS NORMAL OR ABOVE. ORISSA, EAST UTTAR PRADESH, PLAINS OF WEST UTTAR PRADESH, EAST MADHYA PRADESH, SUB-HIMALAYAN WEST BENGAL, HIMACHAL PRADESH, ARUNACHAL PRADESH, AND BAY ISLANDS RECEIVED PRECIPITATION 20 TO 85 PERCENT BELOW NORMAL. RAINFALL DATA FOR THE TWO WEATHER ZONES OF BIHAR WERE NOT REPORTED FOR THE WEEK ENDING SEPTEMBER 3, PRESUMABLY DUE TO A BREAKDOWN IN COMMUNICATIONS CAUSED BY SEVERE FLOODS IN THE CAPITAL CITY OF PATNA AND VICINITY. FOR THE WEEK ENDED AUGUST 27, 1975, 18 OF THE 35 WEATHER ZONES RECEIVED NORMAL OR ABOVE NORMAL RAINFALL.

2. CUMULATIVE RAINFALL FROM JUNE 1 TO SEPTEMBER 3, 1975, WAS NORMAL OR ABOVE NORMAL THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY EXCEPT FOR ASSAM AND MEGHALAYA IN THE EXTREME NORTHEAST WHERE IT WAS marginally DEFICIENT. AREAS ACCOUNTING FOR 87 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL KHARIF CEREAL GRAIN PRODUCTION (USING AS A BASE THE DISTRIBUTION OF KHARIF CEREAL GRAIN PRODUCTION DURING 1970-71 AND EXCLUSIVE OF THE TWO WEATHER ZONES OF BIHAR FOR WHICH DATA ARE NOT AVAILABLE) RECEIVED NORMAL OR ABOVE PRECIPITATION DURING JUNE 1 TO SEPTEMBER 3. DURING THE COMPARABLE PERIOD IN 1974, AREAS RECEIVING UNCLASSIFIED

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NORMAL OR ABOVE NORMAL RAINFALL ACCOUNTED FOR 42 PERCENT

OF THE TOTAL KHARIF CEREAL GRAIN PRODUCTION.

3. DURING AUGUST, BIHAR, ORISSA, EAST UTTAR PRADESH, AND SMALL AREAS IN PUNJAB, RAJASTHAN, AND MADHYA PRADESH EXPERIENCED MEDIUM TO HEAVY RIVERINE FLOODS FOLLOWING EXCESSIVE DOWNPOURS IN CATCHMENT AREAS. PATNA, THE CAPITAL CITY OF BIHAR STATE, WITH A POPULATION OF HALF A MILLION, AND ITS SURROUNDING AREAS WERE AFFLICTED BY THE WORST FLOODS IN LIVING MEMORY DURING THE LAST WEEK OF AUGUST. WHILE THE FLOOD WATER HAD RECEDED FROM MOST PARTS OF THE CITY BY THE FIRST WEEK OF SEPTEMBER, IT HAS LEFT BEHIND A TRAIL OF UNTOLD MISERY AND DESTRUCTION AMONG THE LOCAL POPULACE. THE LOSS OF PROPERTY ALONE IN PATNA CITY IS ESTIMATED BY THE STATE GOVERNMENT AT RS 1,000 MILLION, ROUGHLY EQUAL TO 115 MILLION US DOLLARS. ACCORDING TO AVAILABLE INFORMATION, THE FLOODS, COMBINED WITH DROUGHT IN ONE DISTRICT, MAY REDUCE THE SIZE OF THIS YEAR'S KHARIF FOODGRAINS HARVEST IN BIHAR STATE BY SOME 1 MILLION TONS TO AROUND 4 MILLION. LIKEWISE, IN ORISSA, ANOTHER STATE RECENTLY HIT BY SEVERE FLOODS, THE LOSS OF THE KHARIF FOODGRAINS CROP IS ESTIMATED AT HALF A MILLION TONS, MOSTLY RICE.

4. DESPITE EXCESSIVE RAINS AND FLOODS IN SOME PARTS OF THE COUNTRY, THE OVERALL PERFORMANCE OF THE MONSOON THUS FAR IN THE CURRENT SEASON HAS BEEN EXCEPTIONALLY GOOD. THE STANDING CROPS IN MOST PARTS OF THE COUNTRY ARE REPORTED TO BE IN GOOD TO EXCELLENT CONDITION, WITH MOST INDIAN OFFICIALS CONTINUING TO PREDICT A RECORD OR NEAR RECORD KHARIF FOODGRAINS HARVEST. SAXBE

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